

CAMPAIGN AGAINST "VOICE OF HOPE": A renewed campaign against the Christian broadcasting stations (radio and TV) Voice of Hope and Middle East TV has been announced by a spokesman for the anti-mission society YAD L'AHIM. The organization has also charged that the aid given by the station for building new wings to a hospital in South Lebanon is further evidence of the close ties between the station and the Israel Defence Forces, a charge which was denied by the I.D.F. The anti-missionaries claim that Hebrew-language broadcasts are clear evidence of missionary intent, and they have announced that they have begun to purchase equipment and raise funds for setting up a parallel radio station for broadcasting Orthodox Jewish programs to counteract the Christian programming from South Lebanon. (VARIOUS PAPERS:5-6 May 86)

"RAV GOLDING" RIDES AGAIN: A two-page feature article in the ultra-orthodox weekly YETAID NE'EMAN (9 May 86) by Yisrael Ben-Aharon republished the tale of the alleged Holocaust survivor turned Christian turned Orthodox Jew turned anti-mission campaigner under the name of Rav. Shmuel Golding. Previous reports have raised questions about the authenticity of the "facts" offered by Golding. A statement "disassociating" herself from him was issued by an Orthodox Jewish journalist (Dvora Waysman) who was among the early publicizers of the alleged exploits of the man and his work.

MISSION AIRLINE: A new Christian airline named ADON OLAM ("Lord of the Universe") is seeking to bring pilgrims and Jews from Miami (Fla.) to Israel by direct flights three times weekly. Director Harry Marshall stated that the flights would provide services for pilgrims not usually provided by commercial airlines. According to information reaching YAD L'AHIM, the airline managers are seeking to blend miniature Torah scrolls, the Bible including the New Testament, along with Christian "Gospel" and other religious music, as well as preaching and biblical films. Last year the company purchased its first and only plane, the 24-year-old DC-8, and has raised three million dollars from Christian evangelicals.

Rabbi S. B. Lipschitz, chairman of YAD L'AHIM, has appealed to Minister of Transport Haim Korfu and Minister of Tourism Avraham Sharir to thwart this effort at missionary penetration, and to deny the airline the necessary landing permits in Israeli airports. He expressed bitterness at this new "missionary attack." (SHEARIM 13 May 86 also AL HAMISHMAR 23.4.86)

ANOTHER KIND OF MISSION: You have exaggerated in your praise of Eliezer Sturm and his enterprise SHORASHIM ("ROOTS"). In my opinion they are far from providing an objective and critical study of Judaism as it really is. They represent a form of sophisticated missionizing, and in a sense are more dangerous than the standard ultra-orthodox missionizing. They present a prettified and distorted kind of Judaism for missionary purposes, and even though it isn't the ultra-orthodox variety, it is no less dangerous. (ISRAEL SHAHAK, KAWL HA'IR 9 May 86)

YAD L'AHIM: LIKUD IGNORES MISSION DANGER: "The Likud wraps itself up in a silence that thunders in everything connected with the Mission issue. This stance backs up the Prime Minister and the Alignment as they completely ignore the dangers of missionary activity, especially of the Mormons." These words were penned by Rabbi S. B. Lipschitz, the chairman of the anti-mission organization YAD L'AHIM, in a letter to Yitzhak Shamir, Deputy P. M. and Foreign Affairs Minister, and to the other leaders of the Likud faction in the coalition. In his letter



Rabbi Lipschitz accused the Likud of being silent on an issue which creates a comfortable background for the mission organization to operate without restraint or fear.

"We have no doubt that, if the Likud demanded unequivocally that there be a stop to the construction of the centre of apostasy on Mount Scopus (the BYU Mormon extension), there would have been a response to such a demand. We convey our disappointment to you because we feel there is an obligation to express ourselves to the leaders of the religious community," the letter added. (HATSOFEH and HAMODIYA 8 May 86)

ZEALOT CONVICTED: The Haifa District Court convicted the former Haifa coordinator of the "Kach" movement (the Kahana-led zealot group) Yaakov Zarfati, age 19, of breaking in to the shop of the Christian Witness to Israel and stealing copies of the New Testament with the intention of setting them afire in the presence of journalists (who prevented him from doing so). He was sentenced to 21 days imprisonment and 15 months suspended sentence and two years probationary supervision. M.K. Meir Cohen Avidov (Likud) was a character witness to the defendant's nationalist devotion. (Various papers 8 May 86 - See Selections No. 138, P. 1 "HAIFA")

FEARS OF CATHOLIC "MISSION": Fears of intensified missionary activities in the wake of reports that diplomatic relations will be established soon between Israel and the Vatican are mounting in rabbinic circles. For some years Israeli and U.S. Jewish secularists have been trying to promote dialogue between Judaism and Christianity, but the refusal of the Vatican to recognize the State of Israel has limited the possibility of activity by the Church among the Jewish people. In the wake of the so-called "liberal" policies of the present Pope and the reported increase of contacts between Rome and Jerusalem about diplomatic recognition, reliable sources have noted that such recognition might lead to intensified Catholic missionary activity in Israel. (HAMODIYA 7 May 86)

The recent "historic visit" of the Pope to the Rome synagogue was widely reported in Israel. He hailed Jews as Christianity's "elder, dearly beloved brothers" and strongly deplored antisemitism "by anyone," noting the thaw in Catholic-Jewish relationships begun by Pope John XXIII and the Second Vatican Council over two decades ago. Nevertheless, observers saw no indication of a change in policy of the Vatican nonrecognition of the State of Israel, although some felt the synagogue visit might be another step in that direction. (JERUSALEM POST 14 Apr 86)

EDUCATION AND THE MASS: "Are the Christian masses being studied as part of the ongoing program of 'encounters' which the Ministry of Education is occupied with this past year?" the chairman of YAD L'AHIM inquired in a letter to Deputy P. M. and Minister of Education Yitzhak Navon. The question was in response to the complaint of a Holocaust survivor who was surprised to read mimeographed sheets containing excerpts from the Mass which his daughter was studying at the Borochov State School in Givatayim. There were words of praise for "the only Son of God . . . who bears the sins of the world."

The school principal, contacted by the religious press, did not deny the facts but contended that it was part of a program of musical and cultural education which is "part of the general culture conveyed to pupils." Copies of the YAD L'AHIM letter were also sent to Knesset Members, cabinet ministers and public figures, along with samples of the material being taught. (EREV SHABAT/HAMODIYA: 16-18 May 86)

BAPTISTS IN JERUSALEM: An appeal to the Israeli High Court was made by the Jerusalem Baptist Church against the decision of the Jerusalem

municipality and the District Planning and Building subcommittee. The Baptists appealed the refusal to permit the construction of a much larger church in place of the small structure destroyed by fire several years ago. The subcommittee had proposed a smaller building at the same site, in a residential area, but the Baptists refused to accept the proposal, charging the subcommittee with yielding to religious pressures and fears of interfaith tension.

Baptist Pastor Robert Lindsey claimed that it was the local congregation (and not Home Board pressures in America) which prompted the campaign to remain at the old site. Meanwhile, the High Court called on all parties to seek an alternative site within 60 days. (KAWL HA'IR 16 May 86)

DIASPORA MISSION:

U.K.: CARDINAL HUME ATTACKS MISSIONIZING: According to a London TIMES report, Cardinal Basil Hume repudiated "ill-conceived and insensitive" efforts by Christian missionaries in Britain to convert Jews. He also deplored attempts at "aggressive and systematic indoctrination" among young and vulnerable Jews. The cardinal was speaking at a Catholic service in which he repudiated all forms of antisemitism and called on Christians to acknowledge their religious debt to Jews. The cardinal's remarks were linked to efforts by Jewish community leaders to persuade him, as well as the archbishop of Canterbury and other senior churchmen, to issue a joint statement against Protestant missionaries. (JEWISH TRIBUNE, LONDON 6 Mar 86)

USA: Rev. Wayne Monbleau of New Hampshire has an hour-long radio program "LET'S TALK ABOUT JESUS", and brings interdenominational missions of Christian ministers to Israel to demonstrate that Israel is a safe place to visit. "Now more than any other time is the time to be in Israel," he commented during a recent Israeli sojourn. (JERUSALEM POST 16 May 86)

The Church of the Redeemer was the site of the JEWS FOR JESUS heinous entry into Cleveland . . . the vehicle for pushing our kids to spiritual chaos. About 250 committed Torah-true Jews protested out of a community of 70,000 Jews. Many Jewish kids are disillusioned with what they perceive as a shallow, meaningless Jewish community. Can we (not) unite to save our children? (Shirley Miller Stein) Recent events have angered many Jews (such as) the campaign to convert Jews by various front groups. These full-time missionaries are exploiting the fact that many of our Jewish youth have a very weak Jewish education and identity. The "JEWS FOR JESUS" are born Jews who have accepted Christianity and are no longer Jewish. We demand an end to attempted religious and cultural genocide. (Ephraim Poker) (CLEVELAND JEWISH NEWS 4 Oct 85)

HEBREW CATHOLIC

BROTHER DANIEL OSWALD RUFELSEN: A two-page interview with the Polish-Jewish Catholic Carmelite in Haifa by Hannah Rosenthal was featured in the weekend supplement "Hotam" of AL HAMISHMAR (25.4.86), in the shadow of the visit of the Pope to the Roman synagogue. The article begins with a brief biography, noting Rufeisen's birth in Poland (1922), his youthful membership in the Zionist movement, including religious Zionism, his wartime rescue of 300 Jews, members of the leftwing "Hashomer Hatzair" (publishers of the newspaper), his betrayal and escape to a Catholic convent and then monastery, his conversion to the Church, activities with the Partisans (anti-Nazi underground movement), his monastic vows, and finally his unsuccessful attempt to gain Israeli citizenship under the Law of Return as a Jew in 1962, but gaining it by naturalization in 1963. Following are excerpts from the interview:

Q Why did you convert to Christianity when you have such a strong sense of Jewishness?

A I converted as a Jew, but it was among the nuns that I first encountered Yeshua the Nazarene. The New Testament story of the crucified and resurrected One gave me something of an explanation of the fearful things taking place during the Holocaust . . . I knew that I had never met a man as beautiful and good as He, and as Jewish. (There follows a review of ancient Judeo-Christianity and the great separation between Church and Synagogue.) Our tragedy is that we today determine matters of religion and nationality on the basis of an abnormal situation of dispersion and exile. The average Hebrew Israeli has not yet grasped the full significance of the change brought about by the State of Israel.

Q You found a man and changed your God?

A I've explained that for me the association was not only between the cross of Yeshua and the cross of Judaism (Jewish suffering), but also between the resurrection of Yeshua and the resurrection of the Jewish people after their crucifixion (in the Holocaust). This idea you don't find today in Judaism, but it was introduced by Paul to the Christian world, and it is a Jewish idea which found expression in an internal debate about the nature of the Redeemer and Redemption. . .

Q You confess sins you did not commit (Crusades, Holocaust, pogroms) which clearly belong to the Christian side.

A Not so! I belong fully both here and there, and see no contradiction. . . Judaism today has become the vehicle for conveying Jewish national identity for 2,000 years . . . The Christian faith is the Jewish faith for others . . .

Q Can you tell us about your visit to the Pope?

A I spoke about all these matters in our mother tongue Polish at a dinner with him, and we were together for 1 1/2 hours. He was very open, attentive, I haven't often met a person with whom I could feel I could tell everything on my heart. When we parted, he embraced me, kissed me on the cheeks and said, "Come again."

(In response to various questions, Rufeisen commented on the state of Christianity in Europe — "There are Christians in Europe but not Christianity, and neither in Latin America." He appealed for greater pluralism in the Jewish world for enhancing contacts between Jews and "enlightened Christianity," and hailed the "miracle" of the meeting between the Pope and the rabbi of Rome notwithstanding the ground still to be covered in Christian-Jewish relationships. The interview concluded with the question:)

Q Brother Daniel, in retrospect what did your conversion do for you?

A It freed me from fear, meaninglessness . . . gave me an inner calm that hasn't left me for 44 years throughout the storms and upheavals of my life . . . I found an inner link to God, the Source of all things, in prayer, in personal conversation with him — full understanding — and this is so Jewish!

"MESSIANIC JEWS": A complement of three High Court justices will rule on the refusal of the rabbinate to authorize the marriage of a couple from the Negev settlement Ir Ovot who define themselves as Messianic Jews. The court agreed to hear the petition of Simha Pearlmuter who is seeking to wed the convert to Judaism, Rahel Dar. She has lived with him for 20 years while he was married to another woman, Judith

Pearlmutter, whom he recently divorced. When he approached the Beersheva rabbinate for authorization of his second marriage, he was allegedly turned away on the grounds of his Messianic beliefs.

In his petition on their behalf, attorney Joseph Ben-Menashe claims that Messianic Judaism is a faith stream within Judaism, and the central question distinguishing it from other streams of Judaism is the issue of the coming of Messiah. Since there is no doubt about the Jewishness of the petitioners, the question of their beliefs is irrelevant to the law and to Judaism, he argued. (HAARETZ/HADASHOT/AL HAMISHMAR/HATSOFEH 22 May 86)

CLERGYWOMAN IN GALILEE: A two-page feature article on the new chaplain of the Christian settlement NES AMIM near Nahariya in the Galilee appeared in the local weekly KAWL HATSAFON (11 Apr 86). Petra Helt, a 34-year-old ordained woman of the cloth recently took over the position of chaplain and teacher at the settlement following the resignation of the Dutch pastor Bursma who is returning to Holland. Married to a Welsh Protestant scholar (Malcolm Lowe) who lectures at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, she described her life and calling in Germany and at Nes Amim to reporter Esther Hayn-Barzillai. "Our aim in life is to help the Jews and the State of Israel and also to help ourselves understand the Jews better." In response to a question about possible under-cover missionary aims, she replied: "We are against mission." At the settlement she is active in teaching a variety of Jewish subjects, organizing interfaith lectures, meetings, and the publication of material designed to bring Jews and Christians into closer relations. She also conducts Christian worship on the Sabbath, as well as baptisms and other religious ministries.

CHRISTIANS AND JERUSALEM

ARMENIANS, COPTS, ETHIOPIANS: A series of articles appeared in the Jerusalem weekly KAWL HA'IR concerning the four-year dispute within the Armenian Orthodox community over the change of patriarchs. A link was seen to the affair in the recent slaying of an Armenian layman caught in the crossfire between rival groups. (23 May 86) The long-standing dispute between the Egyptian Copts and Ethiopian Orthodox over exclusive religious rights in the Holy City has produced a backlash among the Ethiopians and their supporters, among whom are some in the Ethiopian Jewish community. This follows increased pressure by the Egyptian authorities to have the Government of Israel override the alleged Ethiopian usurping of Coptic rights in 1968. (9-16 May 86. See also SELECTIONS No. 139, page 5 "COPTS").

FUNDAMENTALISTS AND THE DAMASCUS GATE: Christian Fundamentalists are involved in a project to relocate the bus station near the Damascus Gate in East Jerusalem to make way for a public garden near the Garden Tomb as well as a shopping center complex. The report has stirred up controversy in both the ultra-orthodox and Reformed Jewish communities, the former suspecting a hidden missionary agenda, the latter suspecting an attempt by Jerry Falwell and the Moral Majority "fundamentalists" to gain a "prominent, profitable and enviable foothold in historic Jerusalem where until now they have had virtually no status." It was alleged that another motive was to discredit the claim of the ancient churches that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is the authentic site of Christ's tomb and thereby reinforce the claim of the (Protestant) Garden Tomb (Gordon's Calvary) by excavating the nearby bus station to be relocated under the plan.

Meanwhile, Naomi Teasdale, adviser to Mayor Kollek on Christian affairs, denied that Rev. Falwell or the Moral Majority had any link to the project, but admitted that other "Fundamentalist Christians" would help pay for the project "in an orderly fashion through the Jerusalem Foundation." She insisted that they would have no control

over the shopping plaza or conduct excavations at the site. (IN JERUSALEM 9 May 86)

ITALIAN ARTIST CAUGHT IN WALDHEIM CROSSFIRE: The furore over Austrian former UN General Secretary Kurt Waldheim (against whom charges of wartime Nazi crimes have been made) led to the cancellation by Ramat Gan Mayor Uri Amit of an exhibit by Italian biblical artist Ernst DiGaspari which was sponsored by the Israel-Austrian Friendship Society. Through the intervention of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs in cooperation with Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek, the exhibit was transferred to Jerusalem, where it was warmly received.

The artist, DiGaspari, described a decisive spiritual experience in his life in 1963 while climbing the Alps where he received the "sense of a biblical prophetic calling." He spent three days in ecstatic drawing of his impressions and later received a call to devote himself exclusively to the painting of scriptural themes. Most of the present exhibit was of work he created in Israel, and is especially related to the Book of Jonah and the Psalms. At the opening ceremonies he expressed his love for Jesus, the Jewish people, for Israel and for Austria. (KAWL HA'IR 23 May 86)

"CHRISTIAN PROBLEM": Carl Alpert of Haifa in a syndicated article considered the Christian Celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem and the campaign against the construction of BYU on Mt. Scopus, in the context of a heated debate on the subject. Concerning the "Feast," he concluded that "we were left with mixed feelings of gratification for this international support and strangeness in the exaltation of the evangelical atmosphere." On the debate about whether "the Mormon centre is good or bad for the Jews" (between Yosef Goell of the JERUSALEM POST and Yehuda Schwarz of THE JEWISH PRESS, "a religious-oriented publication associated with Meir Kahane"), his feelings were less mixed.

"Yosef Goell gave a low-key reasoned exposition of the case that Jerusalem must be an open city to all faiths, and Jews should have sufficient confidence in themselves to be able to reject all missionary efforts . . . but Schwartz's frenzied and hysterical onslaught departed from all norms of public debate . . . Whatever evidence he may have had with regard to the true intentions of the Mormons was lost in the turbulent outpouring of insult and invective . . . The atmosphere took on the 'lynch' aspects of what has come to be known as 'Kahanism.'" (JEWISH NEWS 20 Dec 85)

"CHRISTIAN SUPERSTITION": "I don't understand those people who believe in the coming of Messiah and think God needs their help. I can understand the Christian superstition according to which we have to destroy the mosques (on the Temple Mount) and rebuild the Temple in order that the Christian Messiah should come; but that Jews should believe that God needs Gershon Solomon, Gush Emunim or Kahane (right-wing religious militants) in order to bring redemption to the world . . . ?" (Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek quoted in an interview in the Jerusalem weekly KAWL HA'IR 6 Dec 85)

"PEACE PACT" FOR JERUSALEM: Daniel Y. Eleazar, president of the Jerusalem Centre for Public and Political Affairs, in an article in MAARIV (9 Apr 86) called for a "peace pact" among all religions who agree to make Jerusalem a spiritual centre for the world, for promoting dialogue and mutual respect, but with an understanding not to engage in missionizing in Jerusalem or the Land of Israel. While recognizing that conversion and evangelism worldwide are fundamental to Christianity, the writer asserts that the proposed "peace pact" would make such activity a violation of its principles, and would result in the exclusion of violators and their institutions from Jerusalem.

U.S. CONGRESSMEN FOR BYU: A two-page advertisement in KAWL HA'IR (23 May 86) featured a photo of a letter from the U.S. Congress dated 8 May 86 addressed to Members of the Knesset and accompanied by the signatures of over 125 Congressmen said to be pro-Israel. The letter, which is translated into Hebrew, begins: "Dear Colleagues, We have become increasingly concerned by reports here in the United States concerning certain groups in Israel who have undertaken a campaign to halt the construction and use of the Brigham Young University Center for Near Eastern Studies currently under construction in Jerusalem."

Claiming "longstanding support for Israel (because of) its commitment to democracy and plurality," the signers appeal to Knesset Members to "do all that is necessary to see that this project is allowed to be completed and occupied without undue impediments or delays."

ODDS AND ENDS AND ODDITIES

JEWISH MOTHER IN MONASTERY: Marcelle Abramowitz, a 19.5 year-old resident of Akko, and mother of two infants, has moved into a Haifa monastery, and her children have been temporarily housed in a Haifa hostel for children of problem families. Divorced from her husband and moving from place to place, Marcelle was directed to the abbot of the monastery by an Arab-Christian worker in a Haifa hostel for battered wives. The abbot, Kamil Ashahad, agreed to help her when appeals to Jewish authorities and private persons, including an invitation to move in with a Jewish family in Kiryat Shmoneh, proved unsatisfactory, she claimed.

On learning of her move to the monastery, Akko Mayor Eli De Castro denied that the authorities had neglected her. He charged her with making threats and unreasonable demands. The local Welfare Department is continuing efforts to find a suitable flat for the family. (KAWL HATSAFON 11-18 Apr 86)

JESUS IN TIBET: A two-page feature article by Hadassah Arbel in the Haifa supplement to YEDIOT AKHRONOT, (25 Apr 86) allegedly sparked by the receipt of "foul" missionary literature, purported to unravel the mystery of Jesus by means of the shroud of Turin, eight missing "Gospels" hidden away in a Tibetan monastery, and yoga; also the reported "fact" of the New Testament that Paul had seen Jesus on the road to Damascus the day following his crucifixion. Paul is also mentioned as one of the writers of the four Gospels alongside Matthew, Luke and John!

CULTS IN ISRAEL: The English-language periodical "COUNTERPOINT" (Jerusalem) in its Aug/Sept 1985 issue featured an article by Rafael Medoff about an official Israeli Government inquiry into the spread of cult groups in Israel. Sponsored by a former Deputy Minister of Education in 1981 during the Likud administration, the report is still awaiting publication. Among the cults listed in the article said to be operating in Israel are: "Jews for Jesus," Hari Krishna, Transcendental Meditation (TM), the Guru Maharaj Ji movement, and a native Israeli cult called "Finger of God," founded by the late Rini Shani who fled Israel and died in India. Several other articles dealt with alleged increasing cultist activity in Israel and the Diaspora, including Scientology, "Moonies," Jews for Jesus, Messianic Jews, etc.

CIRCUMCISION SUIT: A plaintiff identified only as S.A. (Shin Alef) has filed a suit in a Tel Aviv court against his parents, the Chief Rabbinate, the movements of Conservative and Reform Judaism, the Latin and Greek Orthodox Patriarchates, the United Christian Council in Israel (UCCI), and the State of Israel for damages as a result of the alleged injury to his person because of the rite of circumcision performed upon him in infancy.

He claims that the rite which was commanded by God to Father Abraham was canceled at the request of Father Jacob following his wrestling with the angel, as indicated in Genesis 32:33. In his petition he alleges that the references to the "hip sinew" ("gid hanashe" in Hebrew) is a euphemism for the male sex organ, and the context implies that circumcision was annulled. The ignorance of the various clergy of this teaching has allegedly caused the plaintiff pain, mutilation of his body, and persecution by Gentiles in the Diaspora, for which he requests compensation as the Court shall prescribe. As of the date of the report, no defence has been submitted. (DAVAR 23 May 86)

"THE BLOOD OF THE SAINTS": Emil Grunzweig, may his memory be blessed, a few days before his murder remarked: "The Catholic Church was built by the blood of her saints." Emil did not become a martyr nor did his death give birth to a new church. It wasn't his style or that of his comrades. But when a handful of his friends gathered this week on the third anniversary of his death (during a PEACE NOW demonstration in Jerusalem when a hand grenade was thrown into the crowd), the question was asked: "Has something happened in the three years that have passed?" (KOL YERUSALAYIM 14 February 86)

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